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Comments on Sessions of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, January, 1940

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WHILE the formal sessions of the Fourth White House Conference are now a matter of history, the real work of the Conference began at noon on January 20, when, at the request of Executive Secretary Katharine F. Lenroot, Secretary of Labor Perkins agreed to convey to the President of the United States the expressed determination of the Conference to devote the next few years in bringing to all of the children of our democracy the blessings now enjoyed by a minority of the children of the United States.

The purpose of this Fourth Conference is to point out the deficiencies that still exist in spite of the great progress in American life prior to the 1930 Conference and the forward steps taken during the difficult depression decade. This Conference differs from earlier ones in the special and repeated emphasis which has been put on the fact that the worth and integrity of the individual constitute the cornerstone of our democratic philosophy, as well as the fact that the family is the best medium we have for fostering democratic ideals.

Striking evidence of unfortunate disparities was brought into the Conference Report by various subcommittees, aided by the research staff. For instance, it was reported:

- (1) that studies made in 1935 indicate that one-half to two-thirds of all children in our cities live in families where the income is less than the equivalent of a \$1,260 income for a family of four;
- (2) that there are still over 50,000 deaths annually of infants from two to twelve months old and that 70,000 infants in our land still die in the first month;
- (3) that there are about 10,000 maternal deaths each year, two-thirds of which are preventable;
- (4) that nearly 1,000,000 children of elementary school age are not in school;
- (5) that among the 120,000 administrative school units in the United States, there are vast in-

equalities on the basis of amounts spent for education, and that there are known instances where in adjacent school districts the taxable wealth per child is in the ratio of 200/1.

Lack of space makes it impossible to present here a full list of the recommendations of the Conference, but the following are among the important proposals:

- (1) that unemployment compensation, old age insurance, and other services be broadened and extended.
- (2) that Aid to Dependent Children be adjusted to overcome certain inequalities as between states.
- (3) that school administrative units be enlarged and that there be Federal assistance to help minimize the differences between localities, as well as between states.
- (4) that our youth be assisted in vocational education after leaving school, as well as while in school.
- (5) that an increased effort be made to discover the less tangible social handicaps within the child's own home.
- (6) that local public welfare units should give to children either directly or through existing agencies all essential social services.
- (7) that local public welfare units should be equipped to take over from Juvenile Courts services in behalf of children where issues of legal custody or delinquency are not involved.

The recommendations frequently call for expenditures by local, state, and federal government, and in the session at the White House, President Roosevelt cautioned the Conference that there were severe limitations on federal spending, urging that greater local responsibility be developed.

One of the interesting ideas running through the whole structure like a single thread was the value that comes from participation. Henry Thurston made us all sit up with his forceful comment that we

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Community Planning For Preventive Services

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(The following is abstracted from a paper given at the Southern Regional Conference at Nashville, Tennessee, March, 1939.)

A SOMEWHAT newer and very much less developed form of community organization is that of the local Community Council, which has distinctive and, we might add, extraordinarily promising features. It is primarily a lay or non-professional organization of leading and interested citizens, although professional welfare workers participate in its activities. It is a product of growing community consciousness, of a deep-stirring feeling that community responsibility and community social control are important forces in dealing with social problems.

In Virginia such councils are centered in the schools, even the school children being organized into local bodies to study educational needs. In Louisiana councils have developed in rural centers and possess a more inclusive character. In the State of Washington, councils are sponsored by the State Department of Social Security, and local administrators have actively engaged in stimulating their organization.

A brief description of the Chicago Area Project may further enlighten us in the principles of local community organization for prevention. For some years this project has been experimenting in three areas of high delinquency in that city with a plan of local organization for the control of delinquency. In essence the plan rests upon the following organization and procedure: (1) A program for the neighborhood or areas as a whole, as contrasted with a variety of individual and separate institutional programs; (2) The planning, control and operation of the program by actual residents of a neighborhood in contradistinction to the traditional forms of organization in which control and direction is in the hands of professional or lay persons who reside in or represent outside and more privileged communities; (3) The training and use of neighborhood leaders instead of imported professionally trained persons, professional services to be limited to unobtrusive suggestion and guidance of the movement; (4) Maximum utilization of existing neighborhood institutions, particularly institutions such as clubs, societies, and churches; (5) The activities program to be regarded not as an end, but chiefly as a means of inducing active participation by local residents in a community enterprise and as a device for crystallizing community sentiment toward promoting the welfare of children

and the improvement, physically and socially, of the whole community; (6) Evaluation of results by local representatives to note constructive changes in community conditions and particularly the reduction of delinquency.

If I sense, aright, what lies below the movement toward local community organization, it is that personal disorganization is chiefly a product of cultural disorganization and that we must turn to the community as the ultimate source of those cultural and moral values which stabilize behavior. Our fundamental task seems to be that of rebuilding the culture of our communities, to restore to the local community its responsibility for what happens to its people, to inspire the community to create stabilizing social values through participation of its residents in community leadership and in community life in terms of the whole community. It is the culture of the community which sets the pattern of behavior, be it one of demoralization or of stable life.

The corrective for isolating and destructive attitudes of aversion, contempt, disdain, indifference, fear and resentment will not be that of substituting attitudes of commiseration, charity and benevolence. It will be essential for the community to recognize that it has the power within itself to deal with the problems of behavior which beset it, and which, in an altogether real sense, it has begotten; that it can organize to bring about a normal, happy, efficient, wholesome life for every child in its midst. The state has undertaken, in some measure, to see to it that persons in dire need of food, clothing and shelter shall not lack them, although these cannot be other than meager and simple essentials. Relieved in so large a measure of supplying relief, our local communities must be asked to see that constructive forces are set in motion to rehabilitate those who, through poverty, social disadvantage, lack of incentive, neglect, ignorance and even through willfulness and incorrigibility, are living in degradation and at odds with law, order and decency.

We may not see our whole way, perhaps, with adults, but we can see the whole way with children. Indeed, the fate of the commonwealth may hang upon our ability to inaugurate an adequate children's prevention program, and for this we shall need communities alive to their obligation and to their opportunity.

Now realism bids us not to make community

organization a panacea for all our ills. Modern society is extraordinarily complex, mobile and shifting, making community life difficult to organize and the creation and inculcation of social values and standards of conduct stubborn of accomplishment. What we may see in local community organization is a lost element in a program of prevention and social control. To utilize this force we shall still need professional agencies and professionally trained persons, and more of the latter than less; but what we need is a convergence and cooperation of local leadership and skilled professional service, in the effort to reconstruct behavior and to stabilize human life.

What, then, is the role of the welfare worker, and more particularly the child welfare worker, in the matter? It is, I think, to utilize the community in dealing with welfare problems. The worker can do much to encourage community leaders to study their local problems, to face such problems honestly, hopefully, and, above all, objectively. The worker can stimulate local responsibility by securing participation in dealing with cases, thus gaining opportunity for interpretation of the play of forces upon child life. This is, perhaps, the subtlest and most telling way of creating local interest and leadership, of developing a new viewpoint and a genuine desire to undertake the larger task of organizing the community for prevention. In this, the worker will need the aid of trained persons emanating from some central body of citizens, a state body employing one or two field organizers, who, working behind the scenes, know how to organize local communities and to keep them energized to their task and opportunity.

We well know that the child welfare worker on the field, whose job it is to deal directly with cases, has, already, far more things to do than can possibly be well accomplished. Our citizens, in general, have little conception of the burden of human need and the wear and tear of detail borne by the case worker. Nor do they fully realize that the case worker, in dealing with personality problems, has a task calling for scientific knowledge and training in techniques of diagnosis and treatment fully as intricate as those which confront the physician. The organization of local communities for prevention must not be merely an additional load upon the field worker. It is a task in itself, but one in which the case worker has a vital function. There is point, however, in having skilled field organizers who may be invited in by the community, so that the community may better take the initiative in meeting its responsibility.

After local organization has been undertaken the case worker will need unusual common sense and

resourcefulness in guiding its direction. We well realize how easily local efforts can become entangled and discouraged by rivalry between local agencies, by unfortunately selected local leaders looking for personal advantage and prestige, by lack of skill or knowledge, by the injection of political interest, by too ambitious a program at the start and by a desire to get quick results. Local leadership is the key to successful community organization, and in developing it we must not neglect to draw upon natural or inherent leaders as well as upon institutional leaders. Often there are those men, and women too, who hold office and desire none but who are dominating influences in community life.

Educating a community calls for skilled approaches and it will be accompanied often enough by heart-breaking failures to get local residents to overcome their own warped attitudes toward problem families and persons. We venture the suggestion, however, that communities can learn to deal with their problems and that when they succeed we shall have a powerful aid in creating a prevention program.

The community approach to welfare problems has another aspect and one of no little importance. It is, I think, that the child welfare worker, in dealing with individuals and families, needs more fully to grasp the fact that wholesome personality, purposeful living and adequate emotional response to social values and standards are matters of community participation and status quite as much as they are of individual make-up and family adjustment.

We seem to recognize readily enough that when children suffer from physical disabilities they must be given specialized treatment by competent physicians and medical experts, and when they reveal mental deficiency or mental abnormality special forms of care and treatment are necessary. In many communities, especially in rural communities, resources are lacking to deal adequately with such problems, but at least we know what we need. We also seem readily enough to sense that family adjustments are a constant source of individual behavior problems; so much so that foster home care has become a highly important method of reconstructing the behavior of children when their own families are hopelessly disorganized or disintegrated. Indeed, thus far we have recognized that we can change the home environment of some children to marked advantage and that in other cases we can adjust the child's emotional attitudes and those of his parents, and thus change a home environmental situation without actually shifting the child from one special environmental situa-

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BULLETIN

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Clinton W. Areson Comes to the League as Program Director

THE Reorganization Committee, with the approval of the Board of Directors, has taken an important step by engaging Clinton W. Areson for a six months' period to explore the present possibilities and needs of a non-governmental national child welfare program and sources of possible financial support. He comes to the League February 1 on a six months' leave of absence from his position as Chief Probation Officer of the Domestic Relations Court of the City of New York. This seemed to the Committee the most logical step to bring their work to a successful conclusion.

Planning for Child Welfare is clearly facing a new epoch. The rapid increase of public services for children alone brings into play social forces of wide-reaching effect on the total program for children in the country. Private agencies feel the effects of these new forces, and the recent White House Conference was devoted to forecasting developments over the next ten years. Mr. Areson participated in the Conference as a member of the Report Committee, and continues to serve in that capacity.

Many of our members will recall that Mr. Areson was on the staff of the League from 1923 to 1927, during which time he had a substantial share in developing the early program in the Children's Division of the American Legion, which put that organization behind community effort in child welfare, as distinguished from an institutional program alone. As Secretary of the Children's Code Commission of the State of Wisconsin he directed a comprehensive revision of the children's laws of that State. He then became Executive Director of the De Pelchin Faith Home and Children's Bureau in Houston, Texas, where he reorganized an old institutional program to become a modern child-caring service. As Executive of the Cleveland Humane Society from 1930 to 1934,

he was responsible for a program which served a thousand children in foster homes, and a department for unmarried mothers whose load averaged about six hundred fifty cases. He was invited to return to the League in 1934 as Assistant Executive Director, a position which he held until the summer of 1936.

In this new undertaking Mr. Areson will be assisted by a Planning Committee of the following people: Leonard W. Mayo, Chairman; Paul T. Beisser, Mary Irene Atkinson, Mrs. Richard J. Bernhard, Rev. Patrick O'Boyle, Frank R. Pentlarge, and Alfred Whitman—all members of the Board. It is planned that this Committee shall meet twice a month, and from time to time reports will be made to the Reorganization Committee, of which Mr. Whitman continues as Chairman. Mr. Areson's special title for this service will be "Program Director," though he will also carry responsibility in the regular League service.

Certificates for Foster Mothers

THE New Bedford Children's Aid Society of Massachusetts at its annual meeting presented certificates to a group of ten foster mothers who had either retired or were retiring. The presentation ceremony was made properly impressive. The President of the Board began with the foster mother who had served the fewest number of years, and progressed to the one who had served the largest number of years. The climax was reached with the foster mother who had served twenty-five years and mothered the largest number of children. The foster mothers were deeply and visibly moved, one saying that she valued her certificate more than her high school diploma, and another that she wished time might roll back so that she could begin her twenty-five years all over again. The seventy-five invited guests cheered as each received her certificate.

A formal certificate which carries the foster mother's name, the number of years and number of children served, with an expression of appreciation on the part of the agency, is signed by the President and clerk, and is stamped with the seal of the organization.

The agency believes that this is a satisfactory and gratifying way of taking recognition of the dignity and contribution which foster mothers make to the agency's work.

News and Notes

DURING the year 1939 one hundred and ninety-three agencies affiliated with the League as Associates. They are located in 44 states, the District of Columbia and Canada, the only states not represented being Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon and Wyoming.

League members will doubtless be interested to learn that we now have seven new applications for constituent membership and that four of the applicants have been Associates for a year or more. It appears that as the Associates become more familiar with League activities they wish to move up to full membership on the basis of improved standards of service.

In order to conduct inspectional visits, in some instances the Executive Committee of the League has asked an executive of a member agency residing in the general area of the applicant to accept this responsibility and make recommendations to the Committee on Membership. Several have accepted and a number of membership inspectional visits have been made in this way. This is an example of the cooperation of League members whose interest in the League and the field of child care has prompted this service.

Conferences—National and Regional

MISS MILDRED ARNOLD, Director, Children's Division of the Indiana State Department of Welfare, 141 South Meridian Street, Indianapolis, has accepted the Chairmanship of the League's Program Committee for the National Conference of Social Work to be held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, May 26 to June 1, 1940. The Rowe Hotel has been designated as League headquarters.

The dates for the Mid-Western Regional Conference are March 28, 29, and 30, 1940. The city is Milwaukee, and Hotel Schroeder will be the headquarters. Mrs. Nelle Lane Gardner, Executive Secretary, Children's Service Association, Milwaukee, is Chairman of the Program Committee and all communications in reference to this Conference should be directed to her.

At a recent meeting the Executive Committee of the League recommended to the Board that the Regional Conferences be expanded to cover seven different areas. These were laid out tentatively as follows:

- A. *The Pacific Coast*—as far East as Denver.
- B. *The Midwest*, or the Central Northwest, centering around Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis and St. Paul.

- C. *The Central Southwest*, centering around St. Louis and Kansas City, Oklahoma and Texas.
- D. The new region, to be known as *The Ohio Valley*, or *The East Great Lakes Region*, including Southern Michigan, Western Pennsylvania, Northwestern West Virginia; the center being Columbus, Toledo, Cleveland, Cincinnati and possibly Pittsburgh.
- E. *A Southern Region*, centering around Atlanta, Georgia, and neighboring states.
- F. *An Eastern Region*, extending along the Atlantic seaboard roughly, from New York City to Richmond.
- G. *A New England Region*.

Frank Preston, of Richmond, Virginia, is Chairman of the Committee appointed to plan and develop these Conferences with the help of local committees. Mr. Preston will be glad to receive comments and suggestions from all who are interested in this development.

At the Annual League meeting in June, 1939, the following people were elected to the Board of Directors for a three-year period:

Newly Elected: Miss Mary Irene Atkinson, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Richard J. Bernhard, New York City; Mrs. H. Rene Ruegg, Philadelphia, Pa.

Re-elected: Edwin D. Solenberger, Philadelphia, Pa.; Paul Cornell, Washington, Conn.; Col. Milt D. Campbell,* Indianapolis, Ind.

* Resigned.

An article entitled "Treatment of Children in Foster Homes," by John P. Scott, M.D., in the Pennsylvania Medical Journal, Vol. 42, No. 9, June, 1939, deals primarily with material from the standpoint of health. The following is the summary:

"Ten years' experience of foster home care of young children has proven its superiority to institutional care. Most children can be restored to perfect health in foster homes without danger to exposure to virulent infections present in hospitals. Respiratory disorders are minimized and accidents are infrequent because the foster parents are on their mettle to prevent them. Children are started in good habits of eating and sleeping and receive the affection which gives them a feeling of happiness and security. In addition, they receive the educational advantages afforded by a home usually superior to that from which they have come.

"Many children admitted to hospitals for illness and malnutrition could be adequately handled in foster homes with greater safety and at a lesser cost."

Wassermann Tests for All Children

R. P. SCHOWALTER, M.D.

Milwaukee County Home for Dependent Children, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

WHEN one sees what a tremendous effort is being expended by the United States Public Health Service and private agencies to stamp out syphilis, it would seem timely to point out the value of routine Wassermann tests on all children who come to a children's institution or agency. Routine Wassermann tests should be done on all children admitted for care or placement. According to an article in the American Journal of Pediatrics, 60,000 syphilitic children are born here annually. This blood test is solely for the benefit of the affected child and not because he is apt to be contagious to others.

At the Milwaukee County Children's Home, in over 6000 consecutive admissions, one-half of 1 per cent had syphilis, as proved by positive Wassermann test. Jeans and Donnelly, some years ago, found 2 per cent of the children to be syphilitic at the medical clinics in Philadelphia. Jeans gave the incidence of syphilis among white infants and children as between 1 per cent and 2 per cent. Negative Wassermann tests are now required in Wisconsin before a marriage license can be obtained so the occurrence of congenital syphilis should soon be negligible. There is only one way to find out whether a child has syphilis and that is by means of a Wassermann test or similar blood test. The blood can easily be obtained without injury to the child. Usually those children who are suspected of being syphilitic because of some stigma are actually found to be non-syphilitic. Likewise our positive Wassermann reactors are often found to be children who appear to be perfectly normal. Syphilitic notched teeth do not appear until late in childhood. They are present in less than 10 per cent of the syphilitic children and should not be depended upon for diagnosis. Syphilitic eye disease does not appear until puberty, when response to treatment is exceedingly poor. Unrecognized syphilis may later go on to mental disease, locomotor ataxia, deafness, and permanent blindness.

Early diagnosis and continuous treatment do assure the syphilitic child a cure. Of all syphilitic children who stayed at the Milwaukee County Children's Home for adequate treatment, 69 per cent remained Wassermann negative. Children who had treatment inaugurated before five years of age became free from syphilis in 90 per cent of the cases.

The all-important thing to remember in the treatment of syphilis is that it must be started early in

life and that it must be given regularly every week without rest periods. Where treatments are skipped from time to time, the results are very discouraging.

Children tolerate anti-syphilitic treatment very well. At the Milwaukee County Children's Home we alternate between eight weekly sulpharsphenamine injections and eight weekly bismuth injections continuously for one or two years. The injections are given intra-muscularly. The urine is carefully watched for albumin throughout the treatment.

Sulpharsphenamine is not well borne by adults, but I have never seen a bad reaction from it in infants or children. Patients who do not have a negative Wassermann after prolonged treatment seem, nevertheless, to be clinically cured. They are observed, however, from time to time to see whether short courses of mild treatment may be indicated.

When we realize that without blood tests on entrance to the institution these children might become helplessly paralyzed, demented, deaf or blind, I feel our anti-syphilitic work is probably the most gratifying piece of work we do.

Judging from many years of experience at the Milwaukee County Children's Home, I would say that any child-caring agency that does not ferret out these potential cripples and prevent their trouble has not done its duty.

New League Publications

Two new papers of current interest are now being made available through the League. These are:

CONTINUITY OF CASE WORK SERVICE—INDIVIDUALIZATION IN THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING, by Kate Bullock, formerly Director of Case Work, Connie Maxwell Orphanage, Greenwood, S. C., now Chief, State Division of Child Welfare, Columbia, S. C. 30 cents.

THE UNMARRIED PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP, by Mary S. Brisley, Executive Secretary, Youth Consultation Service of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of Newark, Newark, N. J. 30 cents.

Both of these papers were given at the National Conference of Social Work, Buffalo, N. Y., June, 1939.

Another pamphlet that is now in the hands of the printer and will be ready soon is entitled:

FOSTER HOME PLACEMENT OF OLDER CHILDREN, by Dr. Hyman S. Lippman, Director, Amherst H. Wilder Child Guidance Clinic, St. Paul, Minnesota. 30 cents.

Our new 1940 Directory of Members is in the hands of the printer and will soon be ready for distribution. 50 cents.

Comments on Sessions of the White House Conference

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err in referring to our children and young people as "citizens of tomorrow" instead of "citizens of today," while Mrs. Roosevelt reminded us that we had all in our youth learned to take responsibility by doing, and that our young people would do the same, if we would only give them the chance. At several points in the Conference Report the same idea was found. For instance, "Education for civic responsibility. . . should include actual participation in the activities of community life, national, state, and local, on a level appropriate to his maturity."

More attention was given to the spiritual aspects than in earlier conferences; in fact, the work of one of the committees was devoted to religion and religious education. Still another point of emphasis appearing in the report of more than one committee was the need for protecting minority groups and the extent to which their children suffer as a result of undemocratic attitudes. In the discussion, an important corollary was noted—the harm done to children of the majority or offending group, as well as to the children of the minority.

Among matters not included in the final report was a proposed amendment, overwhelmingly defeated, condemning the use of alcohol as a beverage. Though there were reasons for not including such a recommendation, the writer of this article believes a recommendation to the effect that educational programs should provide instructions as to the use of alcohol would be in order. A similar plan was worked out on the subject of safety education which through an amendment in the general session will appear in the final recommendations.

Another defeated amendment which the writer believes should have passed was the proposal that the final report contain more factual and statistical material to indicate to the general public (*i.e.*, students, ministers, and even propaganda forces in totalitarian countries) that far more has been accomplished in this country than the report would indicate. As a challenge to all of us it might be helpful if the final report gave a summary of our accomplishments in relation to the goals we set for ourselves in 1930. In support of this defeated amendment, the proponent gave as an illustration the fact that at the present time nine times as many children go through high school as in the year 1900, and more young people go to college in the United States than in all of the rest of the world together.

The 1940 Conference paused in its discussions to honor Senator Borah, an early champion of the U. S. Children's Bureau, and several members of this Conference who have died since we last met, among them Grace Abbott and Carl Carstens. Members of the Child Welfare League of America noted that the leadership of our old chief was greatly missed. This fact, as well as the challenge set forth by the report and the obvious need of an organization like the League, certainly constitute our call to action for the next ten years.

Community Planning For Preventive Services

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tion to another. This latter method is often referred to as a psychiatric approach, in that it can be done through clinical interviewing and treatment, though not well without the aid of a skilled field case worker. Thus, on the whole, our approach has been that of expert individual treatment by physician, psychiatrist, psychologist and case worker, with a general recognition, as the sociologist and social-psychologist would see it, that the person to person associations of the child and his family relations are important factors in explaining his behavior and in furnishing clues to his treatment.

What more needs to be done? It is, I think, to take more thoroughly into account the communal relations of the child and of his family. The child responds not only to person to person and family relations, but to the community attitudes toward his behavior and towards his family's behavior. Indeed, in the eyes of the community the disorganized child is not a person but a problem and his family merely one of an undesirable kind, with convenient labels for both. Just to recognize this fact, and its deadly import for the responses of the child, will lead to clearer insight into why the child behaves as he does and to ingenious treatment approaches.

Often a family, otherwise stable, is rendered impotent in rearing and controlling a child because of the devastating influence of the neighborhood upon him, and often, too, a family slumps to levels of demoralization because the neighborhood offers it no stabilizing participation, or will not accept it. Few of us, of the middle classes, realize how much we, as individuals and as families, owe to our class culture, to our residence in stable neighborhoods and to the community organizations which are open to us. Treatment of individuals, therefore, must extend beyond the family to the family's community status and its community participation. A potent aid will be in our hands if the family can be introduced to

active association in community life. At this point local community organization will prove of untold value and give the case worker an opportunity to lay hold of its powerful aid. Organizations for fathers and mothers in the lower classes are desperately needed in connection with schools, churches, and community centers in order that personality-saving influences can be put to work. In utilizing such resources, where they exist, or stimulating their development, the case worker has a most efficacious tool for the rebuilding of personality. When foster home care is necessary, it is quite as important to select homes in which the parents are participants in wholesome community processes as it is to pay attention to the home itself. One test of a stable foster home will be just this matter of its status and place in the community and the degree to which it can introduce the child to vitalizing community life.

Case workers must learn the meaning and significance of what we call culture, that total web of custom, institutions, standards, and social values, attitudes and sentiments, which is generated in community life. Personality and life-organization are responses to cultural life, and the better we understand the cultural life of a community, the more skillful we can become in bringing about individual adjustments. We all realize, perhaps, that family tradition and family solidarity have dwindled under the impact of social change and modern conditions, and that community life, itself, has ceased to be a cultural unity and has become a complex of integrating and disintegrating forces. Communities, life personalities, have distinctive characters, and the two are inextricably interwoven. To understand this is to be forearmed in our task of rehabilitation and prevention.

Book Review

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN MASSACHUSETTS AS A PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY. Herbert Parsons, Director, Massachusetts Child Council. Boston, 1939. 196 pp. 50 cents.

AN EXAMINATION into the Present Methods of Dealing with Child Behavior, Its Legal Background and the Indicated Steps for Greater Adequacy: so runs the subtitle of a report on juvenile delinquency issued late in 1939 by the Massachusetts Child Council.

There is meat for the student of historical developments in the administration of juvenile delinquency laws in Massachusetts, a critical analysis of existing procedures, and new proposals for improvement. Statistical data, though ample, are severely restricted in this presentation.

There is some discussion which the reader may feel

has a familiar ring and there are inferences and conclusions with which he may have long acknowledged agreement. But he will find accepted ideas clothed in language which he will wish to mark for quotation. In addition, new syntheses of the delinquency problem and ways of meeting it are given.

The general inquiry was apportioned among the surveyors according to the following divisions of subject:

1. Foster Home Placement of Delinquent Children
2. Legal Aspects of Delinquency
3. Provisions for Mentally Handicapped Delinquents
4. Clinical Organization and Service
5. Responsibility of the Schools in Relation to Delinquency
6. Institutional Treatment of Juvenile Delinquents

The report represents the give and take of conference-study on the part of one hundred sixty-one men and women. One who has survived several researches that were conducted by groups and has struggled with formulation of a final report for publication is ready to disregard certain repetitions and imperfections of arrangement. The astonishing thing is that any report—to say nothing of an excellent one—could issue from the work of multiple committees meeting scores of times. Presumably the first hundred researchers were the hardest to manage.

The task of supervising this mass inquiry fell to Mr. Herbert Parsons, director of the Massachusetts Child Council. Herbert Parsons, like the rest of us, is playing the role of Sisyphus in dealing with the crime and delinquency problem. Although the stone is too much for him to master, he gets it near the summit now and then, braces it with his foot and, thumbing his nose at the crest, chucks some pretty sizable boulders over the top before struggling downhill with his problem-stone in preparation for a renewed effort.

These comments will have served their purpose in merely giving the flavor of the dish. Go eat it. And do not overlook the portions which deal with the need for continuous treatment of individual cases of delinquency, foster-home placement, and the proposed treatment board. Ponder carefully the treatment board idea and see if you do not agree that the best of juvenile courts are no more than good work-benches, attended often by skilled humanitarians, but without adequate tools for fashioning new personalities or even for repairing those that are seriously damaged.

—LEONARD V. HARRISON

*Director, Committee on Youth and Justice,
Community Service Society of New York.*